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DEPUTY STARK OF TORONTO ON THE THIRD DEGREE

dishonesty should proceed unflinchingly. This is a necessary clearing of the ground.

But clearing the ground is less than half the task. After that must come constructive work, the thorough reorganization of the police department on new lines. This will take time and a bitter fight. Success will depend largely upon the man chosen to be head of the department. But supported, as such a man, we believe, will be, by Mayor Harrison, and assured of time to accomplish his work thoroughly, he can destroy, so far as Chicago is concerned, the most persistent evil in American municipal government.

The report is reproduced in part in this issue.

R. H. G.

The Man at the Top of the List.—The *Chicago News* under date of December 11, 1911, comments under the above title upon a recent order of Mayor Harrison with reference to the making of promotions in the police department of Chicago. He has advised the general superintendent of police that in each instance the man whose name stands at the top of the civil service list of eligibles shall be chosen for promotion. Such a procedure, he points out, "will aid in removing political influence from control of the police department because men will know their promotions will depend upon their own fitness and not upon any outside influence which may be brought to bear in their behalf."

Hitherto appointments have been made from among the three persons whose names stand at the top of the list of eligibles. This practice has arisen because of the conviction that it would not be possible in every case to select an entirely efficient candidate by means of the tests in vogue and consequently the head of a department was given some leeway. The plan developed disadvantages. It has not eliminated the influence of personal favor. It gives the appointing officer opportunity to secure agreements from persons about to be appointed. It prepared a field for blackmail.

When men in the police service have it proven to them that fitness instead of influence is absolutely efficient in determining promotion the results will be salutary.

R. H. G.

Deputy Chief Stark of Toronto on the "Third Degree."—Deputy Chief Stark, in a strong article on "Police Methods and Their Critics," in the August, 1911, number of the *International Police Service Magazine*, assails the popular ideas on the "third degree" and those lawyers whose main ability consists in deriding witnesses, distorting evidence and even insulting their opponents with impunity. He claims that popular knowledge of the "sweatbox" is such that few could define the difference between it and a "soapbox," although they would gladly join in condemning it. Newspapers are often only too willing to dilate upon the supposed horrors of this system of obtaining evidence. I have seen the actual operation of a "third degree" case which obtained a complete confession of two criminals engaged in a variation of the "green goods" game within eight hours after the case was reported. The police worked upon the basis of two words carelessly dropped by the first two men arrested in regard to the third, who was the leader of the plot. Only once during the whole examination was a voice raised above a conversational tone, and then to forbid the prisoners talking further in a foreign tongue. In another case the confession of a stubborn juvenile was obtained only by strapping him in a surgeon's operating chair and ordering another officer to "turn the current on